



SOCIAL INNOVATION FUND

GRANTEE CONVENING

Innovation. Evidence. Impact.

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WASHINGTON, DC



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CONNECTED YOUTH INITIATIVE



Cultivating the good life for **all** of our children.



Nebraska Children & Families Foundation

- **Mission:** Create positive change for Nebraska's children through community engagement.
- **Vision:** A Nebraska where all children will have the resources and support to reach their full potential.
- **Values:**
 1. Prevention
 2. Opportunity
 3. Collaboration





Nebraska Children & Families Foundation Connected Youth Initiative (CYI)

- 2007 – Project Everlast (Omaha)
 - Department of Health and Human Services
 - Jim Casey Youth Opportunities Initiative
- 2009 – Supportive Services for Rural Homeless Youth Initiative (Nebraska Panhandle)
- 2015 – SIF expansion of the Connected Youth Initiative model into six rural Nebraska communities



CYI & Unconnected Youth

The goal of CYI is to use a community-based, collective impact approach to improve outcomes for unconnected youth in Nebraska.

Unconnected youth: ages 14 to 25 and considered “unconnected” because they aged out of foster care, are exiting the juvenile justice system, are homeless or near homeless, and lack family supports required to transition to adulthood.



CYI Model

CYI Core Components:

1. Central Navigation
2. Coaching
3. The Opportunity Passport™
4. Youth Leadership

Framework: Youth Thrive™

Pillars:

1. Permanency
2. Financial Stability
3. Two-Generation Approach

Outcome Areas:

- ✓ Permanence
- ✓ Education
- ✓ Employment
- ✓ Housing
- ✓ Physical and Mental Health
- ✓ Personal and Community Engagement
- ✓ Economic Stability



Why SIF?

- **The need**
 - 300+ youth aging out of foster care in Nebraska
 - Geography and population distribution challenges
- **The approach**
 - Establish/enhance rural Nebraska community collaboratives
 - Use high-quality data to prioritize community needs
 - Use evidence-based practices
 - Build capacity in rural communities
 - Braid existing and new funding sources to meet SIF match requirements
 - Participate in rigorous evaluation process



CYI Evaluation

- Before SIF: preliminary evidence level
- Current SIF Evaluation (in partnership with WestEd)
 - Impact and implementation study
 - Well-Being Index: composite of outcome areas
 - Several data sources (including *Transitional Services Survey*)

Primary research question:

To what extent does the Connected Youth Initiative improve overall well-being for the young persons who participate compared to similar young people who do not participate?



Where are we going?

- Financial capacity-building
- Think of Us & leveraging technology
- Families Thrive™ & two-generation approach
- Developing skilled workforce via cross-training



Questions?

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